

City of San Antonio

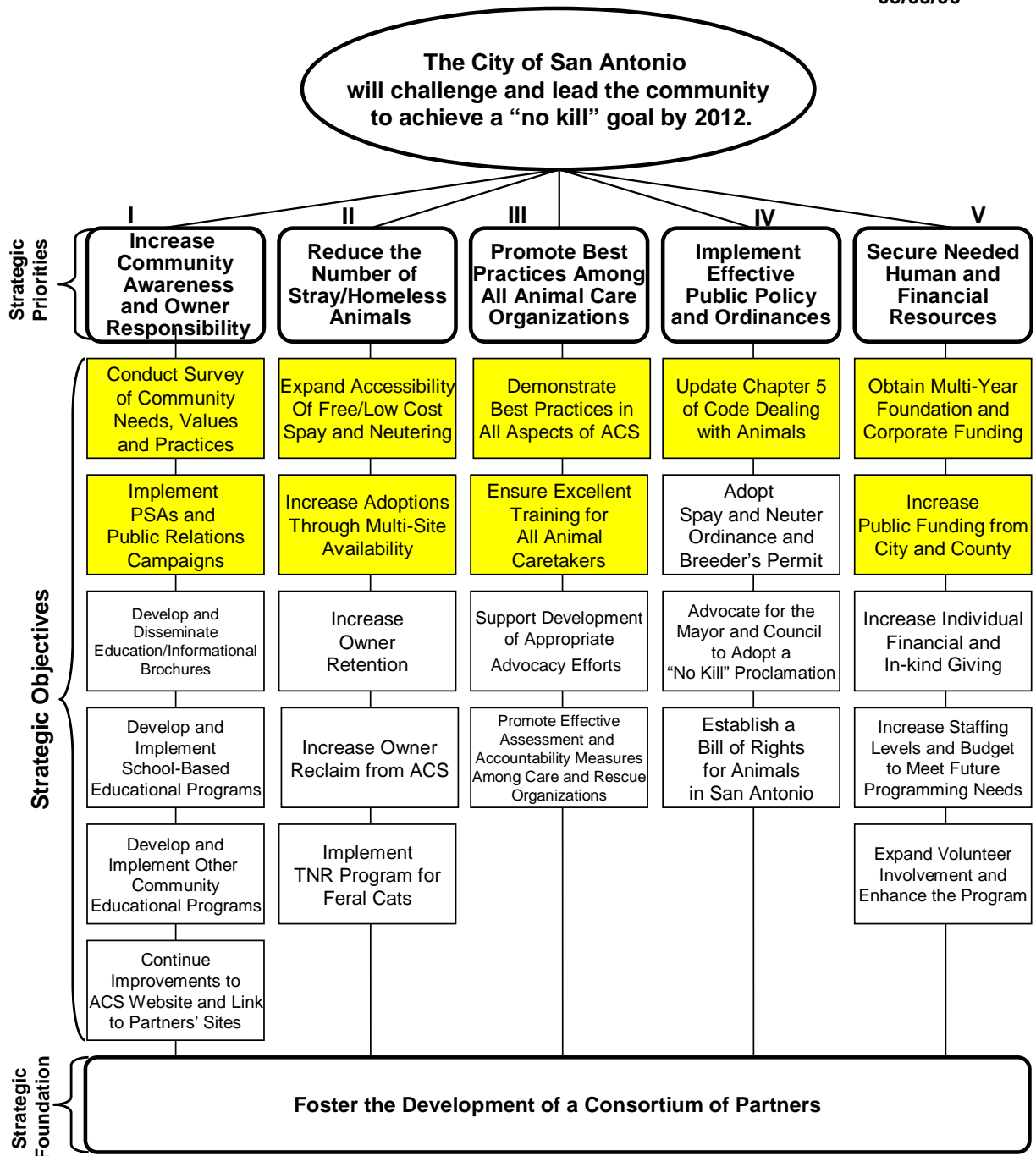
**Animal Care Strategic Plan
Prepared by the
Animal Care Services Advisory Board**

**Preliminary Report
June 2006**

The Strategic Map was used in the development of the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

City of San Antonio Animal Care Services Strategic Map: 2006- 2012

Original Draft
05/09/06



Indicates 1st Year Plan

Rev. 6-28-06

BACKGROUND

In 2005, City Council took steps to implement new policies to end gas euthanasia of animals and to increase funding to spay/neuter programs. With these efforts, the Animal Care Services Department continues to euthanize between 40,000-50,000 animals each year. On February 7, 2006, through a Council Consideration Request, Mayor Hardberger directed staff to begin the process of developing a five-year strategic plan to significantly reduce the number of unwanted animals in this community.

The City of San Antonio's Animal Care Advisory Board held a strategic planning session on May 8-9, 2006 to develop a strategic plan. This plan will guide Animal Care Services for the next five years and engage the community in a comprehensive approach to improving animal care within the City of San Antonio. This document provides a concise overview of the strategic plan and sets the Year One Strategic Priorities. After the Advisory Board receives input from the City Council and community on this draft of the strategic plan, it will make any necessary revisions to the plan. Following Council input, the Advisory Board will finalize the plan and begin developing an implementation plan and schedule with budget recommendations and accountabilities for the Animal Care Services Department. It is anticipated that the Advisory Board will return in August to the City Council with the final plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Animal Care Advisory Board recommends the following mission statement for the City of San Antonio Animal Care Services:

Make San Antonio a city in which every animal receives responsible care.

CENTRAL CHALLENGE

The City of San Antonio will challenge and lead the community to achieve a "no kill" goal by 2012.

Given the complexity of the issues in achieving a "no kill" goal, the Advisory Board has determined that a realistic and attainable goal year is 2012. The Advisory Board clearly recognizes that achieving this goal includes significant improvements in the practices of the Animal Care Services Department. Achieving a "no kill" goal by 2012, however, goes far beyond those improvements. It requires challenging the entire community to carry out a comprehensive set of actions to transform attitudes and behaviors toward animal care and owner responsibility within the City of San Antonio. For the purposes of this plan, the Advisory Board has established the preliminary definition of "no kill" to mean that all healthy and/or treatable animals find a home and that the only animals euthanized are so sick or behaviorally impaired as to not be adoptable.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following multi-year strategic priorities have been established in order to meet the central challenge:

- I. Increase community awareness and owner responsibility
- II. Reduce the number of strays/homeless animals
- III. Promote best practices among all animal care & protection organizations
- IV. Implement effective public policy and ordinances
- V. Secure needed human and financial resources
- VI. Foster the development of a consortium of partners

The following pages summarize the rationale for each of these priorities and spells out the objectives to accomplish each one.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

I. Increase community awareness and owner responsibility

Rationale

Achieving a “no kill” goal by 2012 requires increasing the entire community’s awareness of the critical animal care issues that the City of San Antonio faces. More importantly, it also requires increasing the level of responsibility that pet owners take for the care and treatment of their animals. A survey of the community’s animal care needs, values, and practices will provide a starting point for addressing this priority. After that baseline is established, a wide range of awareness building and educational efforts will be used to increase owner responsibility and engage the community in improving the quality of animal care in the City of San Antonio.

Objectives

- 1.1 Conduct survey of community needs, values and practices
 - Conduct a scientific citizen survey
- 1.2 Implement public service announcements (PSAs) and public relations campaigns
 - Develop and implement a multifaceted, educational and informational media campaign
- 1.3 Develop and disseminate educational and informational brochures
 - Educational and informational brochures targeting a variety of services and options
- 1.4 Develop and implement school-based educational programs
 - Coordinate City-wide with educators on consistent, appropriate literature to target elementary age children

- 1.5 Develop and implement other community educational programs
 - Coordinate City-wide with a variety of civic and community groups to provide consistent, appropriate educational and programs material
- 1.6 Continue improvements to the Animal Care Services website and link to partners' sites

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- Colleges and universities
- School districts
- Media
- Churches
- Civic clubs
- Neighborhood associations
- Senior services associations
- Veteran service associations
- Military community
- Corporations
- Animal care and advocacy groups

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

II. Reduce the Number of Stray/Homeless Animals

Rationale

Achieving a “no kill” goal by 2012 requires a dramatic reduction in the number of stray and homeless animals in the City of San Antonio. This strategic priority outlines a number of initiatives to do that, including expanding the accessibility of free and low cost spay/neuter programs as well as implementing a Trap Neuter and Return Program (TNR) for feral cats. It also seeks to increase the number of animal adoptions by providing multiple adoption sites throughout the City. Finally, it seeks to increase both owner retention of animals and owner reclaim from the Animal Care Services Department.

Objectives

- 2.1 Expand accessibility of free and low cost spay/neuter
 - A. Evaluate and develop a clinic at the current Animal Care Services Facility
 - B. Explore use of mobile clinics for Neighborhood Sweeps
 - C. Maximize productivity of existing organizations that service the community
- 2.2 Increase adoptions through multi-site availability
 - Evaluate current Animal Care Services site and/or other accessible locations for possible adoption center

2.3 Increase owner retention

- Counsel owners about options at Animal Care Services intake

2.4 Increase owner reclaim from Animal Care Services

- A. Provide owners spay/neuter and educational alternatives to fines
- B. Develop lost/found website to assist in matching lost pets with owners

2.5 Implement TNR Program for Feral Cats

- Research and develop a proposal for a potential TNR Program

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- Colleges and universities – Vet and Vet Tech Programs
- Media
- Neighborhood associations
- Animal care and advocacy groups
- Volunteers
- Veterinary Medical Association of Bexar County

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

III. *Promote Best Practices Among All Animal Care Organizations*

Rationale

This strategic priority recognizes the critical importance of improving the policies and practices of the Animal Care Services Department. It focuses on the goal of bringing the Animal Care Services Department to a level where it consistently demonstrates best practices in all aspects of its operations. At the same time, this priority also outlines a much broader goal—promoting outstanding practices among all animal care organizations in San Antonio. It includes efforts to train animal caretakers, develop appropriate education and advocacy efforts, and promote assessment and improvement efforts among animal care and rescue organizations.

Objectives

3.1 Demonstrate best practices in all aspects of ACS

- A. Establish an Operating Plan and Standard Operating Procedures for its employees
- B. Enhanced communication with the public
- C. Develop reliable and accurate database
- D. Evaluation of animal code enforcement practices

3.2 Ensure excellent training for all animal caretakers

- A. Implement initial and ongoing training initiatives in standard operating procedures and all relevant training topics
- B. Require Animal Care Officer and other staff to obtain appropriate certifications

- 3.3 Support development of appropriate advocacy efforts
 - A. Integrate with national, state and regional networks
 - B. Build regional and community partnership efforts in both the public and private sector
 - C. Foster continual communication between Animal Care Services Department and the community
 - D. Foster collaboration among all animal care and advocacy organizations
- 3.4 Promote effective assessment and accountability measures among care and rescue organizations
 - A. Coordinate with other animal care organizations to define measures and set realistic and attainable performance goals
 - B. Collect accurate Animal Care Services Department and regional statistics to determine performance and accountability of programs and funding

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- National Animal Control Association
- Texas Animal Control Association
- National, state and regional animal care organizations
- Regional municipalities
- Animal care and advocacy groups

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

IV. Implement Effective Public Policy and Ordinances

Rationale

Achieving a “no kill” goal by 2012 requires the effective use of public policy and City ordinances. This priority outlines steps to update Chapter 5 of the Code dealing with animals to ensure it is congruent with best practices and supportive of achieving a “no kill” goal. In addition, it calls for the adoption of both a “no kill” proclamation by the Mayor and City Council and a “bill of rights” for animals in San Antonio. It also sets forth the use of ordinances if needed, to reduce the number of stray and homeless animals (i.e. calling for an ordinance on spay/neuter and the establishment of a breeder’s permit).

Objectives

- 4.1 Update Chapter 5 of City Code Dealing with Animals
 - A. Review and revise Chapter 5
 - B. Legalize a TNR Program for un-owned/feral cats
 - C. Amend the ordinance fee structure for owner reclaim and animal surrender to allow for free spay/neuter

- 4.2 Adopt spay/neuter ordinance and breeder's permit
 - A. Evaluate the range of ordinance options
 - B. Implement appropriate approach to spay/neuter and breeders requirements and funding after evaluation of year one strategic plan performance
- 4.3 Advocate for the Mayor and Council to Adopt a “no kill” proclamation
 - City Council to pass proclamation to demonstrate city support
- 4.4 Establish a “bill of rights” for animals in San Antonio
 - Develop “bill of rights” for animals based on minimum standards of care and City Code requirements

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- Corporations
- Education institutions (K-16)
- Churches
- Neighborhood associations
- Public health organizations
- Veterinary Medical Association of Bexar County
- Government
- Nonprofit organizations
- San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition
- Animal care and advocacy groups

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

V. Secure Needed Human and Financial Resources

Rationale

Achieving a “no kill” goal by 2012 requires the effective deployment of both human and financial resources. This priority recognizes the need to diversify sources of funding and outlines objectives to augment public funding with financial and in-kind contributions from corporations, foundations, and individuals. It calls for both increasing the staffing levels to meet future program needs and continuing to expand critical role of volunteers in carrying out program goals. It also encourages the City of San Antonio to use matching funds as a catalyst to encourage organizations to support the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan.

Objectives

- 5.1 Obtain multiyear foundation and corporate funding
 - A. Develop community fundraising plan to support the expansion of free and low cost spay/neuter programs
 - B. Develop strategy for planned giving and endowment fund
 - C. Use City matching funds as challenge grants

- 5.2 Increase public funding from City and County
 - A. Prioritize Animal Care Services in the City's Annual Operating Budget
 - B. Prioritize Animal Care Services in the County's Annual Operating Budget
 - C. Evaluate current fee/fine structure
 - D. Explore and evaluate other public funding options
 - E. Survey animal care organizations to identify potential funding sources
 - F. Begin formal discussion with County regarding animal care
- 5.3 Increase individual financial and in-kind giving
 - A. Promote services offered and need for in-kind and individual gifts
 - B. Create and promote donation fund and tax benefit options
 - C. Create wish list of needed items for Animal Care Services as potential gifts
- 5.4 Increase staffing levels and budget to meet future programming needs
 - A. Promote Vet Tech training as a viable career
 - B. Evaluate program mandates
 - C. Assess community needs and Council priorities
 - D. Determine and implement best practice ratios (i.e. personnel-to-animals)
- 5.5 Expand volunteer involvement and enhance the program
 - A. Evaluate volunteer management program
 - B. Develop community service initiative
 - C. Promotion of volunteer opportunities (website, newsletter)
 - D. Increase funding and supplies for foster care and volunteers
 - E. Volunteer recognition program

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- San Antonio Area Foundation
- Bexar County
- Nonprofit Resource Center
- Association of Fundraising Professionals
- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Humane Society of the United States
- San Antonio Bar Association (Estate planning council)
- Mutual aid agreements with animal care organizations
- Animal care and advocacy groups

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

VI. *Foster the Development of a Consortium of Partners*

Rationale

The City of San Antonio's ability to achieve its "no kill" goal by 2012 depends on its ability to engage a wide range of partner organizations in carrying out this plan. Toward that end, the plan establishes this cross-cutting strategic priority as an essential means of carrying out the other five strategic priorities—from building community awareness to securing the needed human and financial resources. Efforts to develop these partnerships take the plan far beyond improving Animal Care Services. It establishes

this plan as a community-wide initiative to improve animal care in the City of San Antonio and throughout the County.

Objectives

6.1 A consortium of community leaders will form a coalition of partners that will commit to the achievement of the challenge statement of the “no kill” initiative by 2012.

Key Partnerships and Accountabilities for Success

- Corporations
- Education institutions (K-16)
- Churches
- Neighborhood associations
- Public health organizations
- Veterinary Medical Association of Bexar County
- Government
- Nonprofit organizations
- Animal care and advocacy groups

YEAR ONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

I. Increase community awareness and owner responsibility

- 1.1 Conduct survey of community needs, values and practices
Conduct a scientific citizen survey
- 1.2 Implement public service announcements (PSAs) and public relations campaigns
Develop and implement multifaceted, educational and informational media campaign

II. Reduce the Number of Stray/Homeless Animals

- 2.1 Expand accessibility of free and low cost spay/neuter
 - A. Evaluate and develop a clinic at the Animal Care Services Facility
 - B. Explore use of mobile clinics for Neighborhood Sweeps
 - C. Maximize productivity of existing organizations that service the community
- 2.2 Increase adoptions through multi-site availability
Evaluate current Animal Care Services site and/or other accessible locations for possible adoption center
- 2.3 Increase owner retention
Counsel owners about options at Animal Care Services intake

III. Promote Best Practices Among All Animal Care Organizations

- 3.1 Demonstrate best practices in all aspects of ACS
 - A. Establish Operating Plan and Standard Operating Procedures for its employees
 - B. Enhanced communication with the public
 - C. Develop reliable and accurate database
 - D. Evaluation of animal code enforcement practices
- 3.2 Ensure excellent training for all animal caretakers
 - A. Implement initial and ongoing training initiatives in standard operating procedures and all relevant training topics
 - B. Require Animal Care Officer and other staff to obtain appropriate certifications

IV. Implement Effective Public Policy and Ordinances

- 4.1 Update Chapter 5 of City Code Dealing with Animals
 - A. Review and revise Chapter 5
 - B. Legalize a TNR Program for un-owned/feral cats
 - C. Amend the ordinance fee structure for owner reclaim and animal surrender to allow for free spay/neuter

V. Secure Needed Human and Financial Resources

- 5.1 Obtain multiyear foundation and corporate funding
Develop community fundraising plan to support the expansion of free and low cost spay/neuter programs
- 5.2 Increase public funding from City and County
 - A. Prioritize Animal Care Services in the City's Annual Operating Budget
 - B. Prioritize Animal Care Services in the County's Annual Operating Budget

VI. Foster the Development of a Consortium of Partners

- 6.1 A consortium of community leaders will form a coalition of partners that will commit to the achievement of the challenge statement of the "no kill" initiative by 2012.